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AMADEUS

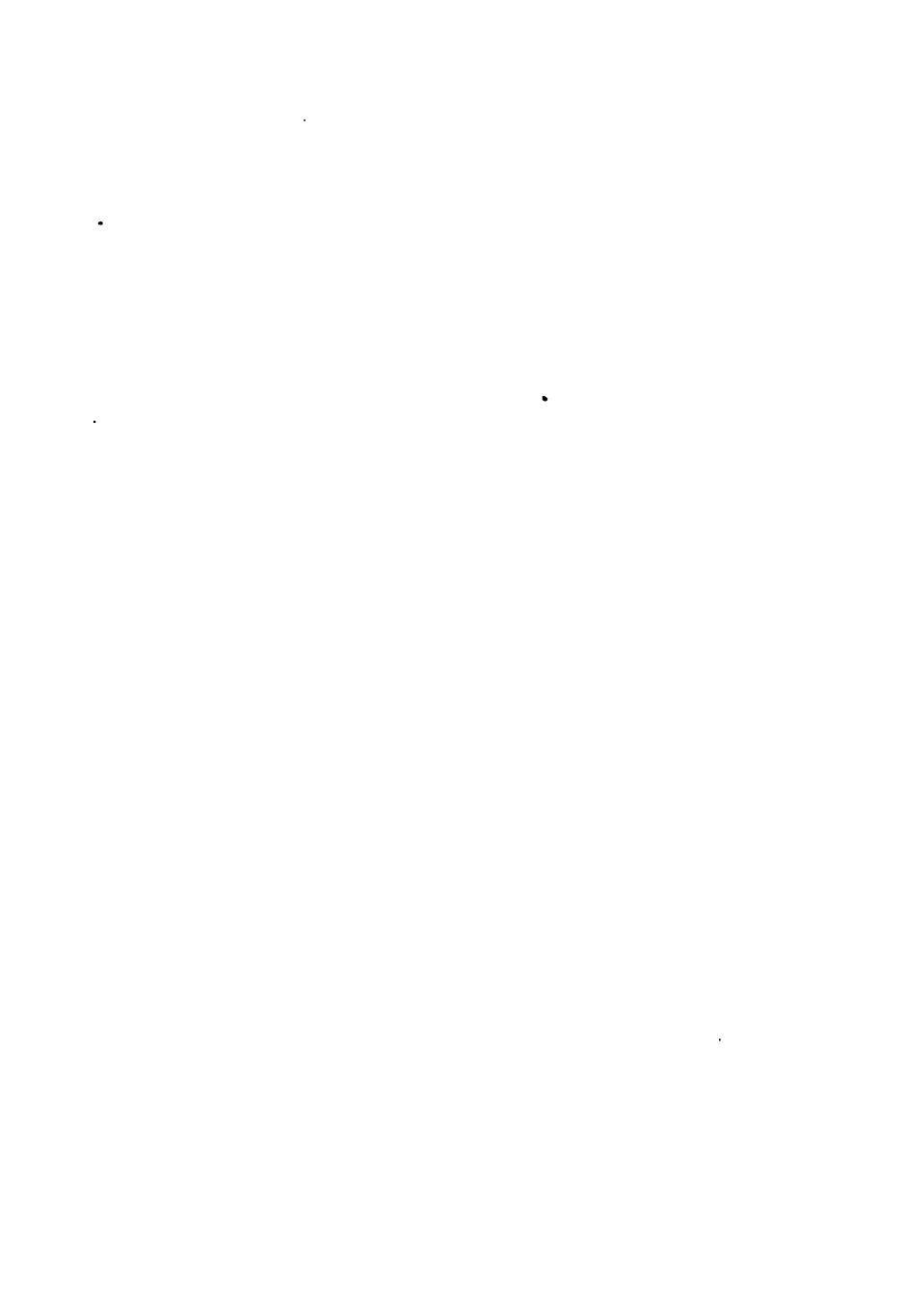
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A M A D E U S.



A M A D E U S:

OR,

A NIGHT WITH THE SPIRIT.

BY

K A R L V A L M A N N.

NEW YORK:

CHARLES SCRIBNER, 145 NASSAU STREET.

1853.

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AMADEUS,

A LIFE—FRAGMENTARY.

AMADEUS, the foster-son of Wilhelm Von —, a proud old noble of Munich, had spent the peculiarly beautiful period of his boyhood in seclusion, near Schaffhausen, on the Rhine. This river, on whose bosom, as legends record, droop dubious shadows, haunted by restless spirits—their complaining voices seemed heard in the low murmur of its waters—had a singular charm for the decayed nobleman, offering, as he conceived, a palliative to the stings of a misdirected and ill-fated ambition. It afforded

also a suitable theatre for the development of the ardent spirit of his young protégé—who had lost by the intrigue of political men an excellent and doating father—and, by a broken spirit, a tender and angelic mother. This misfortune increased the affectionate interest with which he was regarded by his adopted father; for the experienced man of the world foresaw the harsh condemnation which would be visited upon him by the ungenerous, who ever esteem misfortune a crime; and he dreaded lest its influence upon so proud and sensitive a nature should produce a bitterness and mistrust calculated to overshadow a life that might otherwise prove brilliant and joyous. Therefore had he brought his foster-son to this pleasing retirement; and here, too, he had imagined a life of felicity for his only child, his beloved Fräulein, and pictured her to himself in this quiet retreat, apart from worldly contamination, and influenced only by the good and beautiful in nature, and her own heart, growing

up fair and pure, as to him seemed woman in Eden.

Fortunately for the young exiles, Munich, the scene alike of the prosperity and adversity of their respective parents, soon became mere recollection, vague and phantasmagoric, as is ever the case with children whose passions are so imperfectly developed, and whose affections so inconstant : it was easy and even agreeable to exchange and forget the old in newer pleasures ; as with some plants that, translated to whatever clime, will grow and flourish as in their native soil.

Yet, unlike these impressible beings, the old noble was unchanged ; and immovable in his attachment to forsaken Bavaria, his spirit refused to accomodate itself to another home. Occupied as much as possible with accustomed pursuits, and habituating himself to long and severe meditation, he became incapable of applying his mind to ordinary duties ; and it was painful to behold him, unmoved by the

thoughtless amusements, and careless gaiety of the young persons, led on—as they were by each successive influence, unconscious of the guardianship that is required to guide the ardent mind stimulated by awakening affection. Strange impulses would at times hurry him to distant parts of Germany; and to see him on each return more eccentric and reserved than before, and bearing even a sadder mien, affected them to tender sorrow and solicitude.

Amadeus and Fräulein were now rapidly passing from that stage of existence in which reality is veiled from the clear perception in a delusive mist, and when the past and the future are alike influenced by the pleasing superstition of a young and happy fancy. They were now entering into the marvellous consciousness of *self*—discovering with ever increasing wonder its fast developing capabilities and susceptibilities, and experiencing the strange feeling and knowledge of the

presence of the divinity within them—a possession *felt*, but as yet uncomprehended, and from this very obscurity, the more bewildering.

They no longer wove for each other dew-spangled garlands, or laughingly arrested the airy gossamer as it floated by on the evening breeze; but, together ascending some lofty eminence, they would look down upon the beautiful river and the lovely valley below, and over the vine-clad hills and crags, far, far away, to where the daylight melted into a golden radiance in the west; and then descending into the valley, they would wander on the smooth beach, listening to the low murmur of the waves, and in half-playful, half-earnest fancy, peopling every rocky nook and shadowy retreat with intelligent spirits. And then, as the twilight deepened, walk hand in hand, the delicate figure of Fräulien gently touching that of Amadeus in their steps, they would become unconsciously silent, and, at

times, gaze into each other's eyes until the cheek flushed and the heart quickened beneath the spell of that mystic sympathy which unites two beings of dissimilar nature. And as the moon arose, and the heavens reposed in serenity with its twinkling stars, and the sleeping waters, and the shadowy hills brightened beneath her smile, so, too, dawned a peaceful and holy light in these young spirits—the light of a pure and earnest devotion, half toward each other—half to God.

And now, too, awoke within the souls of each, that vague restlessness, as of something unattained, that passionate, unutterable yearning for the expression of thoughts and emotions too powerful to brook the restraint of a voiceless existence. It was the Immortal striving with Mortal.

They had as an instructor in music, an old friend from Schaffhausen, of remarkable talent, but who, having failed in reaching the distinction he had sought, shut himself out from

the theatre of his former hopes and aspirations, and concentrated upon Amadeus and Fräulein his entire powers, to enable them to surmount the drudgery of the art; and having happily accomplished this, he continued to cherish these devoted children, even when he felt that he had completed his educational duties, and prepared them for the fuller revelation and exercise of the extraordinary originality of power which he believed them to possess. He knew that the divine ovum was to be kindled into life by a latent heat, and that the contact of circumstance was necessary to its thorough development. He, therefore, visited Strasburg with his pupils, and observed with rapture the thrilling effect the music of the great artists in Concert and Opera, produced upon them.

Each day their labours increased with such intense enthusiasm, that music became the language of their thoughts, feelings, and whole being, giving their souls and nature's outward

world but one method of expression—one melodious tongue.

* * * * *

Amadeus had reached the age of manhood, and Fräulein was verged upon the woman. Their maturing intellects and feelings now began to influence their actions, and to give each a distinct and fixed individuality of character. Amadeus regarded with deeper interest the evident unhappiness and anxiety of his foster-parent, and with Fräulein strove by affectionate attention and fascination, to win him somewhat from his melancholy and loneliness. One among other devices for attaining this desirable result, they were to propose an excursion to the famous cascade of Schaffhausen, and with much difficulty, they induced him to consent. With the light-heartedness of glad children, they hastened to make preparations for their departure. The startled household became a scene of animation, and Fräulein, unable to restrain her feelings, threw her arms

about her father's neck, and cast a sunny smile upon his gloomy face, which was lighted by her own bright ray, and while imprinting a kiss on his careworn cheek, it glowed with the fervour of affection. It was like trimming the wasting lamp of existence that it might burn brightly though but briefly.

All was ready. The old postilion caught the infection, and drove without mercy to his horses. By midday the little party reached a turn in the road, which brought the sound of the roaring fall, and all at once the grand spectacle of nature burst upon their sight. Amadeus and Fräulein sprang from the carriage, and were transfixed for a time in contemplation. Their souls were aroused to new sensibilities, as they felt this marvellous work of God, designed to elevate the thoughts to eternity. Regaining their self-possession, with a glad buoyancy they dart from point to point, their excited fancy revelling in each newly-discovered scene and object, till their

transport reached a climax of silent ecstasy.

In the stream, there agitated and broken, and here calmly sleeping on the shore, the old man is reminded of his past troubled career; and a hope flits over his mind, that his future may be as serene as the waters at his feet. He turned, and gazed fondly upon his children: it was like the last meteor of night glancing at dawning day. An electric chord in each seemed touched, and they silently embraced, the old man shedding long pent-up tears.

When again at home, they sought to recall the impressions, and renew the emotions, with which those scenes of grandeur had inspired them, and to express it in musical inspiration. In this effort and evidence of genius, the delight of their friendly instructor knew no bounds. He clasped the divinely gifted beings to his heart, and exclaimed, "The Spirit of Heaven is within you, my children, and

His voice it is which has now been breathed forth !”

* * * *

It was a beautiful day in spring-time, and a golden ray of sunshine, stealing through the budding foliage of a quiet nook, rested on the delicate figure of Fräulein. She was seated on a mossy rock, and beside her was Amadeus, holding languidly his violin upon his lap, and his eyes gazing fervently into hers. He had for the first time expressed his love to her in the notes of his marvellously-toned instrument; and she, scarce raising her eyes from the ground, had responded in the timid murmur of a hitherto concealed passion. In that sweet moment, both were lost to the external world, and in the silence of perfect bliss they sat, their hands clasped together, their graceful figures gently inclining each to each, and their eyes liquid with gathering tears overflowing from the full founts of rapture within their breasts.

They were suddenly interrupted by a hasty step, and an agitated voice, calling upon the the name of Amadeus. Breathless words apprized him that Wilhelm Von —— had been arrested in Munich, on the charge of treasonable designs; and hurriedly Amadeus hastened to the chateau to meet the messenger of this intelligence, by whom he was informed that his friends desired his immediate presence in Munich. It was no time to hesitate; and after a rapid and fatiguing journey, he reached the Bavarian territory. He was here told that he was under arrest, as an accomplice of Wilhelm Von —— . A brief and unsatisfactory trial resulted in his imprisonment.

Thus, without a last farewell from either parent or lover, Fräulein was left alone, perplexed and confounded. Her friends in Munich, hearing of her painful situation, removed her to the city, and though for a time disconsolate under so great and severe a misfortune, she soon became in a degree consoled, as she

devoted every energy to intercede for her father. Her first effort was made in supplication to the prince, whom, however, she failed to affect, and her only hope was now in prayer to her God. * * *

Wilhelm Von — pined in his confinement; but the young and ardent spirit of Amadeus rose superior to his misfortune, and in the long and cheerless hours of his lonely prison-cell, he lived over again the beautiful existence of the past. The unhappy nobleman at length fell a victim to disappointed ambition, and his corpse, bathed in generous tears, was removed from the tender embrace of his young adopted son, who was thus left in terrible solitude, made doubly hard to bear from the bitter grief with which this heavy blow had weighed down his spirit.

To enliven his solitude, and afford some alleviation to his despondency, the kind old jailor permitted his little fair-haired daughter to pass a portion of each day in his cell; and in return

for the pleasure her society afforded him, Amadeus taught the docile child to sing to her guitar. She soon became to him a source of so much interest, that he could scarcely endure her absence; and upon one occasion, when she had been for some days ill, and thus being deprived of his only consolation, left to be the creator of his own happiness, the thought suggested itself of living over in spirit the past, and reproducing in music the episode of a brief and happy love.

Some four years of imprisonment thus elapsed, during which time the innocent girl had, unconsciously, become strongly attached to the prisoner. Although, as the period of his release approached, her cheek grew pale, and her look dejected, and still, though when the hour of parting came, the agony that spoke in her last farewell, would have been apparent to any ordinary spectator, yet he saw in her exertions and her hopes in his cause, only the evidence of an exalted nature, and the gen-

erous sympathy of a kindly woman's heart. For the image of his beloved Fräulein was ever present with him, in his future real existence, as well as in his ideal dreams.

The loving and forsaken girl no longer braided her fair tresses for the daily visit to the prisoner—no longer sang to her guitar the songs he had taught her ; but, seated herself at the window, from which he had been accustomed to look forth upon the frowning parapet, in deep and mournful abstraction. One fatal day, when she had lingered there for long hours, until the sunset rays had faded from the walls, and left her in the darkness of the lonely cell, she yet remained, noting the last beats of her heart and her hopes, till, with a deep sigh, the hands were hurried to the hours of despair and dissolution.

* * * * *

Immediately upon his release, Amadeus hastened from Bavaria to enjoy a quiet exile in Dusseldorf, and availed himself of the seclu-

sion of a deserted house without the city. Each night, between the hours of eleven and twelve, he would, in disguise, repair to a restaurant in an obscure street, and there partake of the single and simple meal which sufficed his subtle nature. The frequent appearance at the same place of a party of individuals at the identical hour of his own supper, caused him some anxiety, for which, however, he was somewhat compensated by the pleasure with which he heard them discuss his favorite topics. He recognized in their various idiosyncrasies, poets, artists, and musicians ; and but for the fear of betraying himself, he would have participated in their companionship.

One evening, however, as he sat in his restaurant, half absorbed in his own meditations, half listening to the conversation of the friends, and awaiting the cessation of the storm without, there entered a pale and meager child, who, after passing around to

several others, approached and asked him to buy a piece of manuscript music, at the same time pleading in behalf of a destitute father. The first glance at the manuscript convinced Amadeus that it was the production of genius ; but his limited means did not justify the expenditure of even the small sum required for its purchase. With the ease and rapidity of habit, he glanced over and fixed it in his memory, then replacing it in the hand of the child, with half the price she had demanded, directed her attention to the party at the opposite board, from whom she immediately received double the required sum.

Heretofore Amadeus had interested them ;— now he became the object of their closest scrutiny ; and, as he followed the glad-hearted child into the street, one of the party arose and stealthily pursued both, and saw them together enter a wretched habitation, in an obscure quarter of the city. Here Amadeus

was conducted by his unconscious guide to a bare and desolate apartment, where sat a thin and dejected looking man, gazing abstractedly upon the floor. A scrap of music lay on a table beside him, and near it was a pistol. The entrance of the child failed to arouse him. In the joyousness of her heart, she rushed forward and threw upon the table the wretched coin which struck and rung upon the messenger of death. A bitter and half contemptuous smile played for an instant on his lip, as he thrust the money aside, and said in a low and hollow voice, "Bread, my child—go and buy bread."

Amadeus gazed for a moment upon this scene ; then approaching the unhappy man, softly touched his shoulder.

"Brother," he said, in a kind and gentle voice, "look upon a man poor and wretched as yourself. He sympathises with you, appreciates your genius—hopes for you, and wishes

to spend a few moments in communion with you. In those moments he desires simply to assure you of your extraordinary powers."

Taking the musician's violin from the case, he performed the wonderful piece of music which the child had a short time before offered him. As he concluded, the composer hastily rose, and in another moment they were in each other's arms ; while Amadeus, gazing earnestly into the face of his companion, asked him his history.

"Music," was the reply—and he repeated to his new-found friend the same question that had just been asked him.

"It would be music also," he replied, "but—" The unexpressed thought caused him to shudder, and placing his finger on his lip, he turned hastily and silently away, and disappeared.

The stranger who had followed Amadeus thither and had been a witness of the scene, now again dogged his footsteps, until he saw

him enter his own abode. Pausing to note well the building, in order to be again enabled to find it, he observed a light suddenly appear in one of the windows, and immediately after heard the sound of a violin, and it appeared to him that the musician, as by impulsive effort, was again performing the extraordinary piece of music of the composer, from whom he had but just parted. Then, passages that he played seemed to recall the scene in the restaurant—and others to renew the feelings which burst forth in the happy meeting of these two men of genius. He stood and listened awhile. A heavy storm compelled him to return to the city; and he retired that night singularly impressed with the occurrences of the evening.

At an early hour the next day, Moritz—for this was the name of the stranger—visited Amadeus in his mysterious solitude. His frank and insinuating manner soon won the confidence of our hero, and before leaving, -

Moritz extorted a promise from him that he would make the acquaintance of his friends. By the influence thus suddenly acquired over him, he was also induced to become a member of a noted club of musicians and poets ; but although he received the full confidence and love of all, he persevered in keeping his secret, and in concealing his wonderful powers. Yet, relying too much on his self-control, he was at any moment liable to betray his genius to the subtle art of the sagacious Moritz.

KARL.

ONE gloomy evening, I sat in bedeviling thought alone in my chamber, an apartment whose dilapidated walls sent forth uncouth seams throughout its surface, which vied with the grotesque forms and fearful expressions of those singular monsters and pigmies, which might be conceived only in the nightmare of our artist-friend. From my broken ceiling projected thin and naked laths, on which the rats and ghosts would come to sport and while away with me the silence and solitude of the *long winter nights*.

From my pale goblet, the skull of a once beautiful woman, I had taken a deep draught, and resisted not the mysterious influence that streamed into my soul, as the wine flowed through my lips. . For with a fixed and steady gaze upon the meagre skeleton which hung suspended from above, poor remnant of the active, thinking, and feeling man, I by degrees fell into a reverie, and at length, almost unconsciously, gave utterance to my thoughts.

"I have," said I, "abandoned myself to the phantoms of my brain, and thus lead a most melancholy and visionary life. I have resisted the instincts of a generous nature, and with a strange obliquity rejected the kindnesses, and studiously avoided the little charities of life. Then, since this has been my sad history, what, O heaven, have I to hope for in the future? Nothing—then will I again lose sight of my actual existence, in yielding myself up to a beautiful and dreamy life."

"Just as you please, Karl," said a strange voice close beside me.

Raising my eyes in astonishment, I beheld seated on the opposite side of the fire-place, a tall, thin individual, attired in a suit of grey, fitting closely to his body, and wearing on his head a remarkably high crowned hat, that also grey. He was seated in an easy and lounging attitude, his elbows resting upon the arms of his chair; and his feet, about which I observed a slight malformation, stretched carelessly toward the fire, the genial warmth of which he appeared to enjoy—rubbing his hands softly, while he turned his gaze upon me with a furtive leer.

Regarding this mysterious guest for some moments, with mingled wonder and curiosity, his aspect seemed gradually to become familiar to me, and I unconsciously glanced up at a painting above my chimney-piece, representing Mephistopheles.

"Ah, I see that you know me, Master Karl,"

said my guest, with an air of quiet satisfaction; "so introductions and ceremonies between friends are quite unnecessary."

So saying, he removed his hat, placing it carefully on the floor beside him—thus exhibiting to my view a forehead running back to the ball of the head, which was covered with grey hair, and ornamented with two singular horny excrescences, one on each side. He then proceeded to draw his chair close beside my own, and after gazing into my eyes for full a minute, thus addressed me :

"Karl, can it be that you, a man of sense, and remarkably endowed with spirit, should permit your thoughts to incline to fatalism, and abandon yourself a martyr to the blue-devils?"

I was silent—quite taken by surprise. I knew not what to reply.

"Tell me what it is that you so ardently desire!" continued my strange companion.

Pausing for some moments to concentrate my thoughts, I at length replied :

“I desire a reconciliation between my real and ideal existence.”

“I see how it is, Karl,” he resumed ; “you have acquired a refined taste in your frequent excursions to the empyrian, and you feel yourself grievously burthened with heart, liver, and intestines ; the despicable organs of your ordinary bodily functions. Now, allow me to advise your patient endurance of this disgusting necessity, since it subserves the higher instincts of your nature. If this despondency proceed not from lack of energy, it is doubtless from want of friends. I will guarantee you my assistance in procuring the vulgar stuff that will urge the vile machine of the body. I will deck it with pretty gew-gaws, and excite the muscles of the face to smile, and the hand to open to obsequious friends ; so I will consider your slightest wishes in regard to this

nice vitality, and you shall see realized your dreams of beatitude."

"I accede to your proposal, and accept your services," I replied.

"Then, as it is a bargain, consent to follow me this night, and I will introduce you into the presence of choice spirits."

Rising, I expressed myself as perfectly willing to accompany him, but he checked me, saying:

"I desire you to be *au fait* in the peculiarities of those whom you are about to visit. Therefore remain seated while I sketch for you their origin and history;" and whirling his chair around so as to face me, he rested his chin upon his fore-finger, and fixing his glowing eyes full upon mine, thus commenced:

"It is known in the celestial world that a goddess-mother once, by a remarkable birth, gave life to seven children. Reared under her tender care, they were considered, even in heaven, as gifted with extraordinary powers."

but, becoming discontented, and imbued with a spirit of adventure—a desire of change, they caused their mother unceasing anxiety.

“They consulted together, and in a rebellious moment resolved to appeal to her affection to permit them to depart from their celestial, and seek in a terrestrial sphere, a theatre for their untoward ambition. To this request she urged grave objections, but to the determined natures of her offspring they were of no avail.

“At length, assembling them around her, she thus addressed them :

“‘ My children, you wish, now that you are strong, to possess a field for the exercise of your powers. Here, then, I offer my dominion to be divided among you, while I myself resign a long-honoured throne. I would not have you elsewhere among strangers seek that which you may obtain from an attached parent.’

“They expressed great dissatisfaction at

ais, and their discontent was by no means appeased ; whereupon the unhappy mother was constrained to yield, though upon severe conditions.

“ ‘Then,’ said she, ‘if it is your determination to leave the happiness of Heaven for the ills of earth, that as yet you dream not of, you must know that you shall become mortal, and submit to all the cares and anxieties attendant upon that state. I permit you to depart, but only one at a time, and between each departure must occur a long interval. Having entered mortal life, you will be also subject to death, and remain for a period under its influence, then to re-appear in the same state, ending in another death—and so on even to the end of time. The order of your departure must be decided by the drawing of lots.’

“Notwithstanding these conditions, the rebel spirits remained firm in their determination ; and each elated with the hope of

being perchance the first destined to depart, engaged eagerly in the momentous lottery. He upon whom it fell, elevated with present triumph and future anticipation, bade immediate adieu to his brethren, and departed to embark on his mortal career.

“Heaven’s bestowing one of a divine nature, upon this world, was a subject of rejoicing throughout the whole earth. With his advent came a new epoch in the history of man. But unfortunately for the benefactor, while mankind reaped the golden harvests which he sowed, and the age was thereby advanced, he himself was denied the most ordinary sympathy from those he benefitted. With the mystery of his Divine nature uncomprehended by the mortals around him, he lived among them lonely and isolated; yearning with the might of an immortal love, and the desire for the sympathy and communion of kindred spirits, yet denied all, until he was at length glad to find repose in the grave.

"Then came the time for the appearance of another from Heaven; but his fate was similar to that of the first; nor did the others meet with a happier destiny. Yet revolving years were to effect a change. The goddess-mother had said that the periods of their return from the grave should be so regulated, as that once in successive ages they should all be in life at one time, and eventually, on a particular occasion, meet under one roof. This was determined in order that each, relating his sufferings and triumphs to his brethren, might encourage and strengthen one another, and consult as to whether they might not again resume their former celestial state.

The period of their destined reunion they knew to be near at hand, and anxiously anticipated. Men—wise and learned men—turn their eyes to Europe as the theatre of this event. Countries dispute as to which among them shall be the chosen one. Club-meetings of the gifted in mind have become frequent, and it is

by some even thought and believed that to-night, in a house in this city, which we shall visit together, these long-separated brothers are destined to a happy reunion ; and that by a mysterious sympathy, they shall recognize each other.

In order to be present at the meeting, let us haste to depart. Be patient, and follow me in silence through the night, since at the first faint flush in the Eastern skies I depart.

DUSSELDORF.

THE moon is just rising through the dense mist that veils the horizon. The quiet and delicately tapering spires lift their wizard heads through the vapour, while the grotesque chimneys appear as vizored sentinels watching over the sleeping city of Dusseldorf.

Here and there a single lamp gleams dimly through the heavy atmosphere. We turn from the broad street and enter a retired court. The houses are lofty, but the moon, slowly rising above their parapets, casts our shadows

in long and distorted lines athwart the dusky pavement.

A solitary figure reclines beside the door of the opposite mansion, seemingly motionless as a statue. A footstep is heard approaching, and he languidly raises his head from his breast. A tall, thin form appears, and is about to ascend the steps, when he is attracted by the figure reclining against the side of the door, who stretches forth his hand in faint supplication.

The comer, impulsively thrusting his hand first in one pocket, and then in another, is embarrassed to find that he has nothing to give. A thought seems suddenly to occur to him, and taking from his breast a scroll, he presents it to the mendicant, saying

"Having no immediate necessity for money, I have grown as great a stranger to it as it has to me. Do you know me?" and in the question there is much that the future of his career may disclose.

The feeble answer to the query was in the negative. "Then," said he, "this will purchase you relief," and as if to escape the broken thanks of the stranger, he hastily lifted the knocker and was ushered into the hall, whence we will follow him, for this is Amadeus, the object of our waiting.

AMES D'ELITE.

THE hall is large, and cold, and empty ; but beyond, a door is suddenly thrown open, and a flood of light issues forth, suggestive of cheerfulness and comfort. With Amadeus we enter, and as we do so, fail not first of all to cast our eyes around the room in which we find ourselves.

It is a fine, spacious apartment. The walls are covered both with copies from pictures of the old masters, and originals of men of genius now residing in Dusseldorf, or who, having received the light of science here, are else-

where gaining eclat by their remarkable powers.

An open piano is in one corner of the room ; on it lies a violin and bow, and a violincello, and other instruments are scattered round it. In the centre of the room, and beneath a glittering chandelier, is spread a table, set forth with a rich banquet. The aroma of the smoking viands diffuses itself throughout the room, and amidst them choice wines stand as yet untouched.

The last chair may now be filled, the brotherhood is perfect, and the late comer moves slowly forward with a modest dignity, and is met by one universal acclamation of welcome.

A friend of sweet and most angelic countenance advances and greets Amadeus as a favourite brother, and the easy play of his feature indicates a high and liberal soul, about to enter into communion with one as noble as itself.

Another, of melancholy aspect, who had stood resting his elbow thoughtfully upon the piano, now also comes forward with sudden vivacity, and flourishing a violin in the air, exclaims, "It will not do that you should be always the last among us. I will remain away also, that my presence may be desired, as yours has been for the complete pleasure of the evening."

He who had been a moment before gazing for the hundredth time upon *chef-d'œuvres* on the wall, nodded to his friend, and quietly glancing over the pleasing scene of fellowship, lapsed again into contemplation.

All, even the languid old man, who lounges on the luxurious chair, rise to welcome the general favourite.

The host, a generous-hearted fellow, kindly upbraids him for his long delay, and then half-impatiently exclaims:

"To arms! to arms! to the smoking field of the modern Epicurus."

All move to their seats, the covers are removed, and with spirit and alacrity these men of genius ply the knife and fork, and sparkle with wit as they quaff the choice old Rhenish.

The luxurious dishes and rich wines give life and vivacity to their spirits, and spice to the ebullitions of their free fancies. I wondered to behold these rare spirits thus enjoying the sensual gratification of appetite, and began to think that they had in their composition more of the mortal than our spirit had given them credit for.

As if divining my thoughts, he suddenly turned to me and said,

“Would you wrest the spirit divine from its mortal alliance, when it is only through the mortal that you gain the clue to your immortal nature? The labourer feeds his body, the intellectual man, in like manner, nourishes his brain, that he may give health and vigour to his faculties. Famished, he has no spirit, but in the delicious morsel that he rolls over his

tongue, is perhaps the solution of the mysteries of life and death, and a clear suggestion for immortality.

“ But I would now have you give your attention to the individuals here collected, and to be especially watchful of Amadeus. Do you observe the internal enjoyment evinced in his countenance? To-night he is more than usually impressed with all that surrounds him. He begins to feel with his friends as he has not heretofore done. Do but observe the expression on the devil-may-care face of Moritz. He is a talented man, who has employed his time and wealth in travel and study; he is a great physiognomist and metaphysician, and as a result of observation and these studies, he has become remarkably familiar with the most obscure traits of the human character. It is evident, however, that Amadeus is yet to him a mystery which he is determined to solve. The serpent watches every movement of his prey, and seeks to read his every thought and

emotion. But see! only notice the cautious cunning with which he at this moment regards Amadeus.

Turning my eyes as directed, I observed the gaze of Moritz intently, yet furtively fixed upon Amadeus, by whose side he was sitting; and while thus regarding him, I was startled to perceive him stealthily drop a powder into the goblet which the hand of the latter unconsciously grasped. Scarce was the act accomplished, when the unsuspecting victim raised the glass to his lips, and drained it at a draught. An expression of satisfaction spread itself over the countenance of Moritz. He now regarded his neighbour with a not less earnest but more open interest. I was about to ask of my companion an explanation of this scene, when he again directed my attention to Moritz, who now spoke.

“Brothers of the analytic art, may one, who professing no genius like yourselves, but an humble student in the metaphysical and ab-

struse schools, present a proposition to your skill in divining? What is that which produces the most instantaneous happiness, and is best calculated to elicit those conceptions of the soul which thrill it with vastness and originality? My demi-sensual nature says, wine—and now let no man speak till he has emptied his glass.”

“See,” said the spirit, “the individual now rising, with the long, black hair streaming over his shoulders, the eccentricity of whose character makes him almost a monomaniac. What a wild gaze he fixes upon Moritz as he replies,”

“A delicious dream, oorn in one moment, expired in another; offering to the view of the eager and tantalized spirit that which cannot be grasped.”

Out spake in reply, one with a pale face and dreamy expression, and who was the impersonation of transcendentalism.

“Not so—it is a beautiful thought, embody-

ing in its momentary spell the spirit of some immortal feeling—as the Universal Love. It darts through the mind as a meteor hurrying into a remote and unknown universe; its evolution as instantaneous as its loss;—dazzling, brief, unbounded—too grand, mysterious, and illusive for the mind to grasp at, ere it is gone.”

“There, rising,” whispered my companion, “is a sarcastic, humorous, romancing musician—a famous flutist. Yet are his powers so various, his conceit so pleasant, that he is ever companionable; besides which he has flights of a higher genius occasionally.”

“My friends, are you striving to discover the most intense and concentrated momentary rapture? Then it may be found in the bewildering aroma of a flower—in a single note of music.”

“That is the sensual,” said the eccentric, scornfully, “what have *we* to do in that region?”

“You forget then that dreams are the hallucination of a few drowsy faculties, literally the emptying of our stomachs through the brain, after a hearty supper. Dreams are the pandemonium of the mind—the result of the unholy alliance of the soul divine with the carnal sense. And though the aroma of a flower, or a note of music be received through, and be grateful to our sensual nature, yet the mind it is that appreciates the excellent, the true, and the beautiful, and on this basis builds the noble structure of the heaven-reaching thought, which is rapture.”

“Behold,” said the spirit, “our easy philosopher, who so well fills his chair. We shall now perhaps have mathematics in the didactical style.”

“Some there are who speak of ideal rapture being the soul of bliss, and the developer of the mind’s powers. Others, however, maintain it to be an evil, and prefer the real. Picture to yourselves your staid philosopher—possessed

of the insensibility of an oyster, the phlegm of a toad, calculating the distances of the stars, under the influence of poetic excitement. Why, I should have the whole celestial empire against me, because I caused Jupiter to show want of affection for his father, Saturn, by ruthlessly coming in contact with him ; because I permitted Juno to pay a morning call on Herschel ; and Venus, and Mars, forgetful of their respective duties, uniting in a duet ; while Mercury, instead of proceeding in his accustomed path of duty, pauses to listen to the music of the spheres. The earth would become darkened with continual eclipse ; and, to end the matter, I sent to limbo for producing discord in the celestial system. No, none of your rapturous excitement for me. I take a substantial breakfast, walk quietly to my study, deliberately don my gown—spread maps, place globes, and sitting down with a sheet of paper beneath my hand, and a pen in my fingers, pause and ponder for a full five

minutes before I risk a disturbance of the universe. Yet, you artists who depict the Devil and his court, whom you never saw, yet whose acquaintance you may make some day—you must presume to meddle with my stars. Let them alone, or you may chance to overturn your gallipots in the skies. Then you poets, who at your discretion, or from a want of it, put either vice or virtue into a child's head, and make maidens' hearts mere machines for the production of sighs and tears. You would fain convince us that the stars are angels' eyes, and that their appearing in the mysterious azure vault, just as the last light gilds the closing gates of day, bespoke a constant watch from the earliest slumber of innocence to the last prolonged sleep of the careworn and wretched. Why not call them polished lance-heads—the moon a silver shield—the skies the dome of some old tower? Then you musicians are no whit better, dreaming thoughts from the notes of larks, nightingales and frogs—

winds, woods, and waters—you like to be idealists of croakings, snorts, and neighings.”

“My friend,” here responded the flutist, “we are not responsible for your mental development and spiritual capacities. We do not resent your ridicule, because we know you will, and that oftentimes you have experienced even a rapturous excitement in the happy solution of some difficult problem. You have jested all this while—I will take a glass of wine with you.”

The conversation of the table now became of a less general character, and the argument was lost in the quibs and quirks on the world, on art, and on things in general.

Presently my companion directed my attention to the sad visage of an individual who rose to offer a toast.

“This person,” said he, “is a distinguished violinist, whose every hope in life has been blighted by the melancholy death of his betrothed.”

“ Music—that makes the soul divine.”

The toast is drank in silence, and it has evidently produced an effect upon the general tone of the evening’s conversation.

He of the angelic countenance returns the pledge,

“ The soul that renders music eternal ;”

and the table assumes a still more serious character.

From the foot of the board proceeds the voice of our friend of —— who drinks,

“ The soul that makes the world divine !”

“ Observe,” said the spirit, “ the smile on the face of the flutist.”

“ I knew a man who declared that he had no soul, and like those, perhaps, debarred the grand privilege, contended that there were no such things as souls.

“ Without a soul, this man grew excessively fat, and being greatly incommoded by his

cellular tissue, betook himself to grieving thereat, and soon became as thin as the lean apothecary; and finding, as the pharmacist might say, in the residuum, that his soul was so minute, he pitied the wretched thought of the '*genus homo*,' whom he supposed had contrived these souls."

A voice inquired the fate of his friend without the soul.

"He became crazy," was the reply.

"I do not see," said the other, "how he had the soul to do so."

"Why, he borrowed one, binding himself at the same time to return it."

"When and where?"

"On their meeting some time hence on the Plutonian shore."

"His name was Common Sense, I judge," eked out the dry philosopher opposite our friend, who gave the tart reply,

"No, I think Uncommon Sense was the title to which he answered."

There was a genial smile on the faces of the company at these little sallies, when their attention was attracted by a new voice. And gazing solemnly over his spectacles, a grave personage remarked :

“ This recalls to my mind one of these men so entirely destitute of a soul. He saw everything through the medium of gold, and woe, perhaps, to him, he delighted in the wail that proceeds from the hearts of musicians.

“ This man lived admired and courted by the men of the world. He died strangely, and on the night of his death, a sad moaning arose at the door of every musician in the city. With their noted readiness to soften the sorrows of the unfortunate, each opened his door to the stranger who complained so sadly without, when in comes a little sneaking animal, crouching at their feet and whining piteously, as though imploring shelter from the inclemency of the weather. The artists, as by a single impulse, permitted his entrance, and gave the

desired bed on the hearth, after which each retired to his own rest as usual.

“On rising in the morning the animal had disappeared ; but lo ! their favourite instrument, all brightly jewelled, lay where he had last night reposed.

“The body of the man was removed to the burial place, and an elegant monument shortly arose upon the spot.

“Now, it is said, never musician passes by that tomb, but a sigh of praise is painfully eked out from the vault, making it seem that at death men do find their souls, and learn too surely to know their attributes ; so that in death they lament, hopefully for the future, the accursed past.”

Amadeus gazed intently on the speaker—yet uttered no word. The host rising from his chair, exclaimed,

“My friends, I have a whisper from the soul, and it complains for wine. Let us, then,

drink a bumper all around—even to the bottom will we drink, such wine as this will inspire the soul.”

Moritz, who had been watching another opportunity to infuse a second potion into the wine of Amadeus, now does so, and without creating suspicion. He unites in drinking with the host. When the handsome artist on the left of the host speaks :

“Once I had the thought of painting the soul. The first suggestion of my imagination was, to make a grand curve, starting from a mere point of space and winding itself gradually upward. I did so ; embodying in it all the marvellous effect I knew in my art ; but coming down to this infinitely small space, I hesitated with naturally paralyzed power. For days I sat and gazed upon the little point which my pencil had left, awaiting a suggestion of the most boundless fancy wherewith to fill the void, but neither my hand nor mind

being then inclined to work effectively, I left it at last—left it late one night, half-despairing of its completion.

“Rising in the morning by the break of day, I felt a strange disposition to look on my picture again. Drawing aside the curtain which veiled it, and gazing eagerly, I beheld my incomplete atom of canvas disposed of by an insect which had deposited an egg just in the minute spot.

“My picture is spoiled, thought I, yet may not this, by some mysterious agency, solve the difficulties which labor in my brain?

“Thereupon, I sat down, and turned my attention to watching from hour to hour, till with the last rays of the sun that stole through my curtained window, the insect burst its shell.

“Immediately I placed a magnifier to it, and to my infinite delight, in the more dark speck, I looked upon the most beautiful conception of being that my eye had ever beheld,

or my fancy conceived. It was a something so divine, that I said to myself, 'only God can define the soul!'

"I stood over it till the insect moved, and by slow degrees climbed up my line; and watching through the whole night, until the break of day, I saw it at the rising of the sun attain the climax, and then suddenly and joyfully spreading its wings and raising high in the pure and sunlit atmosphere, it vanished from my sight."

Amadeus sighed and sat in deep thought. His wily neighbour cast a glance at the host, who rising, proposes to drink equally—

"To Romance, Painting, Music, and all the generous arts."

They drink, and Amadeus, listlessly replacing his glass, rests his head upon his hand, and sits gazing intently upon a point of the opposite wall. A change comes gradually over his aspect. The muscles of his forehead contract and his brows knit. His eye seems to pierce into the future, and the pupil expand-

ing, becomes intense and glassy, while the ball burns in its socket. The teeth are clenched, and the nostrils dilate into such thinness that the arteries which dart the excited blood, become apparent. His dark hair no longer waves in beauty, or wreathes itself in graceful and fantastic curves, but gathered involuntarily in his fingers, is scattered in wild disorder about the forehead and temples, contrasting strangely with their marble paleness.

Melancholy is stamped upon his face, and the characteristics of high imagination, strong-will and self-reliance. Raphael, that most spiritual of painters, never produced features more entirely exclusive of all animal traits. The idea suggested by his aspect, is that he is a man who has within himself a strange world of his own, wherein to revel as a God.

His companions gaze wonderingly upon him, and as they catch the quick and marvellous transitions of expression that flit over his face, begin to think that beyond a doubt

the soul of Amadeus is working out some enigma—and that presently a burst of eloquence must ensue.

The corrugated features relax, as though some heavenly inspiration had just dawned upon his soul, and a smile, sweet as the earliest beam of the sun upon a troubled sea, plays over his agitated face.

As by an electric influence, he starts from his seat, and seizing his violin, is in another moment in his own peculiar world.

At this instant, my companion, touching his forehead with his forefinger, and giving me a significant look, said :

“Karl, we will now leave the scene before us, and accompany Amadeus in the spirit.”

“There comes, as from an infinity of distance, the voices of a choir chanting—their notes are joyous, and inspired by a sweet melancholy, and as they float by, the sounds are caught and reëchoed by his violin.”

Those who sing are the spirits of the blest, breathing their unchangeable happiness through the courts of heaven, whence it is echoed down, down—thrilling to music the far-distant spheres. The entrancing melody steals through the heart in a mysterious foreshadowing of the bliss eternal.

The chant swells and falls, till at length the community of voices dies away, and in the departing echo two voices alone arise in a duet, full of exquisite fantasy.

They sing to the bright hours of eternity; sing of angels—of pleasures that have no monotony and know no end—joys that are more unsullied and tranquil than virtue's dream, more replete with ecstatic beauty than the poet's twilight reverie—sweet, but sad reverie, with her one hand on the wasted past, and her other on the promising future.

The celestial sisters chant. They declare that the vast universe is under their guardian-

ship, and that in one planet they cull a hope, and in another while away a joy; and that when the circle of beautiful duties is passed through, returning, they joyfully place their offering at the feet of their God.

One of the voices melts imperceptibly away, and the other dies also. And then, gently descending as from a higher heaven, a female voice is heard singing the praise of Love Divine. She is the tutelar saint of the heart of man—that for a brief period leaves that far-remote world which is darkly sealed to the brightest soul.

Her notes are above all human power, and a strange and thrilling rapture breathes in every tone. By her voice he is transported to new spheres of thought, and grand and radiant worlds of feeling, till he loses remembrance of himself in the eager delight with which he receives the knowledge of the hidden. The mysterious voice rises and falls, and dwelling

again, lingers on the ear for a distinct moment of time. Then rising more and more, trills into heaven.

The brief rapture is over, the divine melody stilled. No more, forever and forever, can his soul thrill beneath its influence again. Like all the most beautiful and dearly cherished, the dreamy and the actual, on the mind and heart—it remains its brief moment and is then forever flown, and we have left to us only its memory—its phantom, haunting the spirit as a perpetual and yearning desolation.

In vain does the languishing spirit of Amadeus court again the transcendant melody—yet ere the sound passes entirely away, and as, to his excited imagination, the divine singer seems to fly from him, he madly pursues her over field and valley, above the frowning mountains, and along the solitary sea shore, between beetling crags, and within the silent

cove, throughout the world. He is now beneath the surface of the earth, and deep within a chasm, where melancholy broods, and echo rings out her plaintive wail ; suddenly the stillness is broken by a sound from within, feeble and indistinct, yet so still is the atmosphere of this dreary place, that is heard the roll of monotonous notes as the buz of an insect.

The sound becomes more palpable as the insect seems to approach, and as rapidly beating the air with its wings, the rocks reëcho the sound with marvellous effect. The wily thing approaches near and yet nearer, winding a supernatural song in gossamer sound about the head of Amadeus ; and at intervals a hollow chirp varies the lonesome uniformity of the notes, and a sharp supernatural click rings loudly with ventriloquial character, dolefully marking the time with its accurate throb.

These strange disturbances of the air united, are strengthened in their sublime attributes of

effect by surrounding circumstances; as at the dead of night, the wind moaning through a cranny in the wall, while the sad monitor of the passing hours peals out the solemn midnight chime, and the watchman rings forth his startling cry upon the silent air. At such a moment all the senses start into full action: the imagination passes through fresh scenes, the mind revels in strange fantasies, the heart realizes new emotions, and by an inexplicable charm the mesh of the mystic is woven around the human.

The buzzing gradually falls, the chirping becomes deeper and smothered, and the clinking creature gradually wastes its folds of sound away in the distance—till at last they are together mellowed in a far receding murmur, and are gone.

The fevered desire burns in Amadeus to realize again the rapture of the song which had perished to him.

When lo! there is a sound within the cleft

rock, and wild bursts of merriment break through, how strangely sounding on the desolate stillness of that place.

A moment more, and a pale beam of lurid light issues from between the rocks ;—a light strangely like that along the horizon at night, when heavy storm-clouds part their voluminous folds, and disclose the wan moon rising in a sea of vapor.

The fiendish laughter and yells, are at intervals accompanied by shrieks of demoniac ecstasy ; and most horrible of all, female voices seem to take an eager and exciting part.

Now is revealed to the startled gaze of Amadeus a scene of grotesque wildness. In a vast cavern, extending back even to losing itself in intense darkness, a grand amphitheatre has been rent open in the primitive rock. Rude galleries surround it, rising one above another, and in the midst stands a strange throne of scaria, with a giant's pelvic bones composing a seat.

On each side of this throne stands an enormous skeleton, from whose hollow sockets flow rays of phosphorescent light, which gleaming down, wastes itself on the vast space below. A gigantic arm riveted in the solid rock of the frowning vault above, grasps a chain of bones from which branch others suspending unique lamps. The first branch consists of foetal skulls—after which succeed those of childhood, youth, maturity, and lastly the deceased head of extreme old age. In the background of this cavern, where the ghostly light of the strange chandelier falls, is a huge pyramid of skulls, on the summit of which sits with a majestic Jupiter Tonans air, the divinity of the place. Infernal passions have stamped their trace upon his immovable features.

There, in the presence of the august divinity, a wiry skeleton, aided by a concourse of fleshless fellow creatures, has opened a grand ball. Instruments that had hitherto lain neglected about the area, are snatched up and thrummed

on with fearful energy ; and as they play, the rattle-bone dancers springing upon each others' heads and shoulders, vault from the ledges of rock to the floor, and balancing themselves upon a single toe or finger, whirl round with wonderful rapidity. Others link themselves in a chain, and wheel in a dizzy circle in the air, while the whole cavern resounds with the peals of fiendish laughter.

In an instant the mad dance is at an end, and the unruly spirits, scampering to their proper positions, stand silent and demure, while a train of solemn moving skeletons enters the area,—the aspect of some extreme sadness, others frown, and others again in abstracted moods stare vacantly—and not a bone of them all that does not look devilish. The new-comers each appropriate an instrument, and lo! at the first touch discord prevails throughout the whole area: while the former musicians look on with malicious glee, and mimicking the artistic motions of the

others in putting the instruments again into tune, glance over their shoulders at their neighbours for the half-suppressed smile of applause. Soon, however, their instruments, as if by a superhuman influence, flow into accord.

A solemn pause ensues, followed by the sound of a rattling heel upon the rock. The step moves slowly up to an elevated platform opposite the throne, and then is presented to view a tall figure, with every muscle wasted away, destitute even of the organs of vitality, yet enveloped in an immense system of nerves over which is expanded a transparent tissue of film, through which they are seen to contract or expand at every motion. Upon his chapless lip is a bitter sneer, and his quick-rolling eyes dart electric fury. That eye in its breadth of vision seems to possess the complication of seeing, hearing, and feeling, and as it now moves stealthily over the orchestra, and then rests with a steady gaze upon the crowd

below, an universal shrinking runs through the whole assembly. - In his hand he holds a forearm bone, the relic of a grand master of harmony—curiously sculptured upon the knob, with a ghastly face. Every hand is ready, every eye fixed upon the uplifted baton. It sweeps the air with a rapid stroke, and the grand overture commences.

A crone resting with cool indifference upon a mass of bones, chatters through her snaggy teeth a theme full of vagaries ; taking exultant pleasure in producing the most savage notes, and grinding her teeth fiercely with the most abandoned passages. An individual accompanying her, throws out eccentric variations, by rattling his finger bones on his teeth. A huge old skeleton, with his foot upon the body of another whom he holds down upon a rock, wrests from him his leg-bones, despite a fierce resistance, and with them performs a bass accompaniment on an intestine stretched across the foramen of the pelvis, to the sharp treble

of a dwarf, who, fastened by his hair to either of his arms, strikes his finger-bones on a delicate membrane, drawn over the obturator foramen—one runs his fingers over his mouth in imitation of pipes, while another produces singular echoes by blowing into a hollow leg-bone.

Here a female with her wiry fingers plays upon the skull of another, who rolls about in tortures, and there a revolting wreck of humanity strikes his heels against his shins with a dull and hollow sound, until exhausted by his efforts, he falls back upon the rocks, grinning in ferocious ecstasy. This one rattles the bones of his feet, that one, of his hands; and an amusing little vagabond perched upon a heap of bones, seems to pride himself upon dislocating his jaw-bone, which returning to its socket, gives out a sharp, cracking sound. A joyous-looking fellow strikes a pair of clavicles together, another contorts himself, agitating his spinal processes, and a stupid skeleton

crouches himself in a corner with another on his lap, whose teeth he twists to and fro with a startling sound.

In this brilliant and marvellous overture not a fault can be detected. It seems to embody every species of passion,—all the sorrow, and mystery, and madness that result from evil; with the remorse, but not the repentance attendant thereupon. The wretched players seem to have taken anguish from the human world to reproduce it, heightened, in their own.

There is a pause—when the attention of the company is attracted by the sound of a violin, on which an infernal-looking skeleton, mounted high on a solitary projection of the rock, is producing the wildest combinations of sound ever conceived of in strangest fancy. He is an exception here, since none but himself are permitted the use of an earthly instrument; but in leaving the world, he brought with him

the violin, which had there constituted him
THE UNEQUALLED.

After this solo, there is again a pause, when a scornful skeleton, with a skull remarkable for its intellectual development, rises in the midst of the orchestra, and draws a rib-bone bow over the sensitive nerves of the brain stretched across a skull cut transversely. He produces the wild and mysterious music of the mind, and in it exhibits powers such as can be known only to fiends familiar with its fearful workings.

He is succeeded by another of sad and sentimental aspect, who performs a melancholy air upon heart-strings drawn over his own ribs, just above the heart. It suggests Love—its lingering longing, its melancholy lament, and its deep bereavement. And all is quiet, when a scraggy female peals out a beautifully agonizing wail, rich with the truthful expression of every secret feeling that influences her sex, and she unfolds that mysterious power which gives her sway.

Her song opens as a mystic discourse, but presently she is borne away in raptures. Then as recollecting her infidelity, in the revelation, with vengeance on herself, she shrieks out a plaint of despair—the startling pathos of madness,—and a delirious prayer, accompanied by forcible gesture. Then lost in utter distraction, she bursts forth in imprecations on the ruin of her sex, and her wild notes make the very rocks tremble.

A comparative quiet now overspreads her features, and her notes fall, and startlingly picture the hope in death, and the soul waking up to recollection in eternity.

There is a deep and breathless silence. The grand director, who has stood as beneath the influence of a charm during the last performance, now starts suddenly from his motionless attitude, and walks hurriedly to and fro on the platform, his eyes rolling in phrenzy and his fingers coursing through his rough and matted locks. Now he stops and gazes intently as

with a half-fond, half-fierce delight upon his old divinity, as if courting fresh inspiration from his answering gaze. Then he turns with a fierce and menacing aspect to his wild band, and every eye sinks before him. Furiously stamping upon the foot-board and waving his baton, as by an electric influence, every hand obeys the signal, and a mad discordant medley resounds throughout the area, and there is again silence.

The eyes roll with renewed fury, and the baton again descends—followed by a terrific crash from the united tones of every instrument present.

The lamps pale, the figures become indistinct; yet in the misty wasting of the light, the burning eyes are seen to roll and the baton once more to fall. A burst like the mingled howl of the tempest, and roar and shudder of an earthquake succeeds—then all is still.

The assemblage is lost in the darkness, nothing is now seen but those terrific eyes wheeling

and flaming as they gradually retreat, until they disappear in the distance:—and a midnight darkness descends upon the breathless silence.

Amadeus starts from his bewildering trance, and dashing his violin upon the floor, the strings snapped asunder, give out a wailing sound. His companions who have watched him through his transport, with apprehension, are confounded to see his beloved violin in ruins, and Amadeus rushing from the room, apparently in a state of delirium. On recovering from their bewilderment, they all as by a single impulse follow him.

Wandering from street to street, we closely pursue his steps. Amadeus at length enters a retired and shadowy avenue; my companion here turns to me and says, "Now he conceits a form of marvellous beauty glides before him, in semblance the being who sang the anthem of Love Divine."

She enters beneath a monumental arch-way,

very quaintly wrought. As he passes within its heavy shadow, he finds himself in a burial place, where death's mute divinity in silence reigns.

But Amadeus pauses not in his awful presence, but breathlessly glides through the avenues, or treads the fresh and yielding graves in anxious pursuit of his guide. They are in a retired part of the cemetery, and for a moment she disappears from his view, amid the deep and motionless shadows of the trees of death. He hesitates to proceed, when suddenly she again appears at a distance, waving to him her snowy hand. Instinctively, as by some irresistible spell, he obeys the signal.

They are at the entrance of a vault, and the door opens from within with a dull and moaning sound. A blast of cold, damp air rushes forth. Amadeus again hesitates. A clammy dew is on his fevered brow, and he shrinks with a shivering horror, not unmixed with dread, from that gloomy cavern. The spirit glides

softly before him, and upon the threshold pauses, and with a glance back, again slowly and gracefully waves her hand. He has no power to resist. He enters, and the door closing behind him, he finds himself alone. At some little distance he perceives a pale light issuing from behind an angle of the wall. Moving towards this light, he finds himself at length in what appears to be a subterraneous cavern. He beholds suspended from an old stalactite in the roof, a lamp of pale and motionless flame, whose chain is wreathed with roses, long since withered, yet preserved and petrified by the water that, dripping slowly from the roof, has encrusted them with reddish spar. Beneath the dull light of the lamp, which shines through this spar, is a sarcophagus, all fretted over with the same glittering encrustation wrought into grotesque forms. The place has the appearance of age, yet not of antiquity, since there is none of the taste of the artist of the past here displayed. Indeed

it appears strangely deficient in the beautiful conception and fine elaboration of that genius whose special supervision is nature.

Along the walls and among the broken tombs are forms of loathsome monsters and reptiles, transfixed in stone, with here and there groups and fragments of petrification, bearing in their various forms distorted resemblances to the works of nature; and the whole almost induces in the mind of Amadeus the suspicion that here nature had created without God. He is strangely impressed with the scene; so much so, that he loses sight of the circumstances which have led him hither, in the wonder with which he surveys this degenerate conceit of the arabesque.

"Surely," he thinks, "these are types of the hidden and marvellous, and abnormal nature has designed them as hieroglyphics to denote this as the grand mausoleum of the high priests of the Mystic."

Everything has the appearance of perfect

death in stone. Yet a spell seemed broken by his entrance, for suddenly a mass of terrible objects begin to stir and move slowly, as if reluctantly awakened from long protracted slumbers.

The lamp, with pendulous vibrations, swings to and fro, shedding its rays of phosphorescent light upon the tombs below. Drops of petrifying water trickle down the walls and fall in slow and distinct beats upon the floor, producing forms yet more monstrous than any which have decked the wall, or corruscated the tombs. Creatures of forbidding aspect stretch themselves, and yawn, and stare about them. A serpent that had hitherto lain coiled upon the foot of the sarcophagus apparently in a state of torpor, now begins to manifest a dilatory approach to life. It opens wide its filmy eyes, and arching its bristling neck, gives an angry hiss.

An apathetic toad struggling out of a narrow crevice of rock, with fearful and progressive

leaps reaches the middle of the floor. A huge grey owl starts from an obscure niche, and a subtle vampire is instantly on the wing. A hyena moved from behind a tomb, snarling through its glittering teeth at the intruder, and as Amadeus turned from the new and appalling scene, one still more horrible met his gaze. For slowly rising above the edge of the sarcophagus, appeared a human head of livid and corpse-like aspect, and as the body, shrouded in the cerements of death, gradually raised itself into a sitting position, the filmy eyes turned their cold and glassy gaze full upon the horror-stricken Amadeus. Turning he fled from the dreadful scene.

After threading innumerable passages, he next found himself in a vault, even more extensive than the former. Broken shelves of rock jut irregularly from the walls, interspersed with niches—some of which are involved in midnight darkness, and others illumed with a pale and ghastly light. The air

is burthened with sulphurous fumes, and at intervals the sharp-pointed rocks emit phosphorescent sparks.

Along the shelves lie heaps of skulls, with marks not only of age, but of vile, unextinguished passion. Another group evinces remains of vitality, and the shadowy semblance of comic mirth and humor; and a third is composed of the wretched and sorrowful.

Upon a solitary block of stone rests a venerable skull, with a mild and abstracted aspect. On the wall of an alcove, visions and dreams are sculptured, and within is a skull seeming as rapt in transitory bliss, gazing full of hope into a beautiful world. A skull with the traces of an eternal youth, and faith, and hope, and truth, stands in a niche, gazing meekly upward; a wreath of perpetual greenness binding its head, casts tender shadows on the face.

A bright flash of light for an instant blinds Amadeus, and the scene changes. Pigmy

bodies, with enormous heads, dart from their places and fly about like vultures upon him, laughing in his face, and exhibiting anger, scorn, and hate—others in fury spring upon his shoulders, and seize his legs, inflicting on him every species of torture. With a violent effort he breaks away and escapes.

Maddened with despair, he rushes through another passage of the vault, and finds himself in the midst of a festive scene, of which only the emblems remain. There are the lights and the banquet outspread; there, too, are the revellers, dancers, and musicians, all in the attitudes of life and motion, but they are transfixed by some instantaneous enchantment into petrified stolidity, though retaining the hues and expression of vitality.

There is the reckless fop, the beau blasé, the brilliant wit, the joyous youth, the budding belle, the constant lover, and the heart-betrothed—all in the attitudes of the spirit-stirring dance. Then there are the envious, the

incompetent roué, the withered beauty, the cuckold husband, the deserted wife, the blissful married, and the mother blessed. Then there are the excited fiddler, the solemn bass, and the hard-working musical drudges composing the orchestra. The groups of loungers, and the scattering somebodys and nobodys filling up the pandemonium, which is styled a worldly fête.

But as Amadeus stands, lost in amazement, he becomes conscious of a slight torpor creeping slowly through his frame—of a gradual rigidity of limb and muscle. It is the mystic charm of the place, but it is not yet too late to escape. He nerves himself and with a mighty effort breaks away, and rushes out of the cavern.

As he descends a narrow and rocky passage, a low, booming sound, as of stupendous machinery echoes and reëchoes from cliff to cliff. A torrent of water pours over an immense wheel, the levers of whose axis rest in the

opposite wall of a gorge, and mingled with its creaking and roaring, is that of numberless huge cylinders of rock, which, as they revolve, cast out floods of liquid light that fall through a cavity into a fathomless pool—from which is thrown, with explosive force, volumes of vapor, gathering into fog and cloud to shroud the earth. The gigantic machinery starts with mighty impetus. Innumerable wheels and pulleys begin to revolve, from almost imperceptible motion, to the rapidity of lightning. With a violent shock an immense spherical body is raised slowly from the gorge, and rolling heavily along the earth is plunged into a magnetic ocean with a deafening report. From thence it rises through the mist a globe of bloody hue, and ascending into ether, becomes the glorious orb of day, awakening animated nature, and diffusing its rays through the gladdened hearts of all creation.

The agitated mind of Amadeus seems to calm, and he imagines himself amid scenes of

enchanting beauty. The atmosphere is balmy and luxurious, with a sense of profound repose. Lofty trees cast deep and cool shadows upon the grassy slopes, and the banks of streams are enamelled with flowers of rare form and marvellous coloring. They lift their proud heads to hail the morning God, and woo the breeze to shake them free from the dew of night. And as the sun ascends and disperses cloudy mists, they turn and widely open their gorgeous bosoms for the genial ray to dry the remaining tear; and gratefully load the air with their perfumed breath.

Insects in gladness spring and dart sparkling in the sunlight—some with gossamer wings fly like a beautiful thought. Birds of radiant plumage wing with merry grace and note—while others bathe in the limpid stream, or skim along its burnished surface. Birds of more solemn mood, with stately wings, circle round the forest top, and the gay songster of the sky ascends through the bright beams of

morning, to pour forth its joyous melody in the eagle region.

Far through a distant glade winds a lake studded with green and shadowy isles, on whose banks browses the timid fawn, enamored with its own graceful and mimicking shadow as reflected in the mirroring water. Numberless inhabitants of the wild pour forth, wandering and feeding through the luxuriant savannah, and on hill and in valley to the Alpine peak.

Amadeus, in his felicitous trance, creates and peoples this marvellous Eden, wild with rapture. But suddenly the blissful vision is dispelled. A shock as of an earthquake is suddenly felt, and through the chaos the sun has exploded, and the heavens are filled with rolling clouds of flame. The hills vomit forth fire—the woods are enwrapped in one broad conflagration, the lake and streams glow like sheets of flowing fire. The flowers shoot out meteors, wreathing themselves in constellations,

retaining their identity. Birds and insects dart through the air, leaving behind them long wakes and trails of fiery sparks. Further and more rapidly the flaming clouds descend, until the Eden-scene is a withered and parched desert. At length all vanishes,—a pale and ashy hue succeeds the dazzling glare, and darkness descends upon the desolate waste.

It is the silence and dreariness of a mighty desert. But suddenly in the stillness is heard a sound—the far-off, yet rapidly approaching tramp of an affrighted steed. And in a moment, like the sweep of a whirlwind, there rushes by with streaming mane and glowing eye-balls, a steed blacker than the gloom around, and bestrode by a gigantic black rider. Swiftly on their track follows a light cloud, whose apex is surmounted by a pale crescent, poised upon a column of light, with a flame upon each horn, encircled by a wreath of stars. It seems the emblem of purity chasing away the spirit of an evil presentiment. Round and

round the desert flies the frantic animal, and swiftly and steadily pursues the star-crowned cloud, gaining ever upon the black rider.

The affrighted horse plunges into a black pool, but the fierce rider forces him with a bound to reach the opposite shore, and clenching his teeth, and shaking his iron feet, defies the spiritual pursuer. Terrific as is his speed the crescent overtakes him. The cloud rests for an instant full in his pathway, then with one awful swoop, hurls a cloud which coils like a monstrous serpent its folds about him, and bears rider and horse to the bowels of oblivion.

A howling wind succeeds, the sun seems to pause, a red glare pervades the heavens, the clouds, with a hissing surge amidst rain and fire, quell the raging sea, and drifting to the remote horizon, leave the earth in quiet, and Amadeus in deep repose.

Wrapt in gentle sleep, his tortured brain rests but to conjure dreams, although of beauty

—still of toil to an over-excited mind. He fancies himself wandering through Elysian scenes, the souls of the blest pour forth in anthems their matinal worship. A guardian angel hovers above him, it moves, it leaves him; but turning beckons him on, and directed by her gentle guidance, he enters the cherished scenes, and greets friends long loved and lost.

Breathless with anxiety, he follows the oftly fading figure, till he passes through an arched door, labyrinth colonnade, and lofty, winding staircase; at the summit of which he enters an artist's studio. With desperate eagerness he endeavors to overtake his angel guide, but she vanishes in the shadow of a recess. In grief he sinks upon the floor. He raises his eyes to the moonlight which streams through a fantastically wrought window, forming with its chequered beams figures that with each instant change, describing the endless circle of the Mystic and the Beautiful. They are re-

flected and refracted from wall to wall, and rest in chaste and simple lines of burnished lustre on the floor.

At his feet are traced in succession strange and startling images—an elf's head, and a child's first idea, a maiden's dream, a mother's consummation, the acme of a poet's thought. Flickering in a transient ray of light, is the immortality of the human soul. And near it is a cherub holding a convolvulus over a newborn rose-bud, as if to secure its virgin incense. Approaching is a nymph holding a palette of radiant pearl, on which is a rainbow of resplendent color dissolved from the sun's rays; in which she dips her pencil, and depicts visions of the celestial world. From her pencil grows a figure, powerful as Hercules, stern as Jove. On his lap is an open tablet, and with trembling pen he writes strange hieroglyphics. At his feet lie symbols of the earth's first creation—relics of the ark—records of mind in its development—sceptres of the

powerful—fragments of magnificence, science, and art.

At the conclusion of this representation of antiquity, she essays to depict the struggles of man to establish the age of revelation; rapidly she paints with glowing tints and character the persecutions and triumphs of martyrs—the crumbling of thrones, and downfall of power by overstretched tyranny and heathen superstition. Subject after subject glides from her magic hand, till reaching revolution and reform. A pale sadness dims her brow as she approaches the present and future; she hesitates; the heavenly colors on her palette fade, and with one sweep of the degraded paint, she blots out the half-completed picture, and is gone.

Amadeus springs wildly up, and gazing around to catch another glimpse of the vision that had enchanted him, perceives a picture on an easel, the tone of which is softened in the mellow light of a high candelabrum. It is

that of a female, and as he looks upon it he is ravished with its fairy-like beauty. The tresses are as the last rays of the setting sun ; her face is lit up with the opening knowledge of life. She is a being born of the morning, yet destined to live eternal in the twilight. She is the soul of the mystic beautiful, which exists in the poetic mind.

He recognizes in this picture his *ignis-fatuus*, and as he rushes to the eazel, the fairy original passes before him.

He turns, and in pursuing her, enters his own chamber ; she disappears through the open window. He falls upon its sill in profound slumber, and in blissful dreams she again appears in duplicate numbers, bearing him through the still and balmy air. They reach a grotto, and lay him upon a downy bed of flowers. Left alone with him, she rests upon his pillow, soothing his sleep with her gentle spirit.

Moritz, who had drugged the wine of Amadeus, at the convivial party, having spent the night in fruitless search, seeks him in his chamber, as a last resort. The door stands open—the light burns dimly upon the table. The morning's grey dawn steals through the open casement, at which Amadeus is seated with his head resting upon his arms in profound sleep.

Moritz is transfixed with surprise and joy. Yet an uncontrollable anxiety possesses him as he approaches softly, and touches his shoulder—the sleeper starts, and gazing first wildly around him, and then into the face of his friend, exclaims,

“Oh, what horrible dreams and visions I have had.”

Up to this moment I had been entirely absorbed in following the mazy windings and varied scenes of Amadeus' trance. When he awakened, and I beheld the first faint light of

dawn fall coldly and almost imperceptibly upon his form and features, I turned to look for my guide. He passed into the street, whither I pursued him, and pointing his wiry finger to the roseate east, he said,

“Herr Karl—the cock crows—the morning assumes its early flush, and I must bid you adieu.”

With this the spirit disappeared, and I found myself standing aghast. I had been amazed by the strange power of my companion—and confounded by the occurrences of the evening. However, I soon found my way to my apartment, and yielded myself up to a short repose.

DENOUEMENT.

THE friends of Amadeus in Dusseldorf, now satisfied of his genius, suggested to him the advantage of his immediately appearing in public. But to this he objected, fearing the enquiries that might be instituted regarding his past life. He shuddered to think of his being again condemned to prison—now with the additional crime of being a fugitive from justice ; yet foreseeing that through the kindness of his friends, he must inevitably become known, he resolved at once to quit Dusseldorf. Acting upon this resolution, he left the city

secretly, as he supposed, and proceeded to Munich—to him the seat of danger—yet the point at which centred all his future hopes and aspirations.

On the day of his arrival he observed placarded throughout the city, the announcement of the first appearance in Munich of a celebrated prima donna, of the name of Fräulein. The name was in itself sufficient attraction for him—and he repaired to the theatre; for the time regardless of personal safety.

Five years had now elapsed since he had visited the theatre. The grand music of the orchestra, in the overture, at once entranced him; and when the curtain rose and the fair prima donna made her appearance, amid the enthusiastic applause of the multitude, his heart grew sick and his brain dizzy with contending emotions. That graceful form—those spiritual eyes—those pale, yet passionate features,—he thought, could this be Fräulein—his own, long-lost Fräulein?

He clasped his hands on his throbbing temples—threw back his dark curling locks, and gazed in phrenzy through the tears that streamed down his wan cheek. Then closing his eyes he strives to dispel the illusion. He is once more aroused—and now she stood visibly before him, and her voice rose clear, sweet, and sonorous. It grew familiar—dear to him by its every accent, and his emotions became too powerful to be repressed any longer, and he arose and hastily fled from the house.

Moritz had consulted with Amadeus respecting his intentions in thus visiting Munich, and found him determined on making an effort which might affect both the monarch and people to his favor, and so make his future unlike his past life. To attain this end he had resolved on appearing in a concert for the coming evening, when he would give the history of his mysterious and eventful life in the language of music. Moritz had circulated through the city information regarding his

singular personal appearance and marvellous abilities.

The morning's papers had teemed with letters and notices from the most distinguished men in Dusseldorf. The desire to be a witness of the debut of one so extraordinarily endowed, increased with each hour of the day. The night came, and the house was thronged with the noble, the beautiful, and the talented, and a little world of those who love genius or delight in mystery. Moritz sat behind the prince, that he might observe the fluctuations of his mind in his features, and not far from them was the *prima donna*, Fräulein.

As the hour approached, the countenances of the audience betrayed eagerness and anxiety. The clock struck the hour appointed for the musician's appearance. With the dying reverberations of the bell, the spirit entered the house, and as the mantle fell from his shoulders the attendants drew back and gazed in silence. A breathless moment was passed by the

audience, when with a firm step and modest mien, Amadeus advanced upon the stage. His handsome form invited universal admiration—his pale, intellectual, and spiritual features, bespeaking thoughtful melancholy, instantly won the hearts of all. After an extraordinary introduction from the orchestra, Amadeus slowly raised his violin to his breast, and delicately touching the strings, the musician gave life to a scene of rural enjoyment. The merry songs of birds, the low converse of woods, and the plaintive ripple of waters, mingle with the notes of two happy children. This was a brilliant and marvellous exhibition of power, not of imitation but of feeling—deep and earnest. The while not a whisper fell from the lips of lover to his mistress, and no electric glance proceeded from artist to artist, but spell-bound all gazed at the performer.

As the bow moved again, the violin gave utterance to another and more absorbing strain. The pulsations of two hearts deeply

moved with tenderness for each other, the strong throbbings of their new emotions, and the deep breathings that embrace the volume of the old. Then came the melting notes of a subdued yearning—that sweet solace for a loved one's absence. Now almost abruptly, the stirring sound of foot-falls, in a prisoner's lone cell—and then their faint echo in the deep moan of an isolated heart—then rose the bold thought of ambition, mellowed down into that sweet dream of hope and love—that has ecstatic existence beyond the brief hours of imprisonment. The music quickens to the rapid flight of the liberated. It depicted a solitary home—then made happy by kindred spirits. The opium-dream—the sudden fear of being known, and again imprisoned. The aspirations of a noble ambition, together with the anticipations of happiness in devoted love.

The last notes of the violin had died away ; yet the musician lingered before the bewildered gaze of the audience. Had not his extraordi-

nary history been told—touchingly and truthfully? Yes! but elevated by his thoughts and emotions, into a world remote, he had, unconscious, remained standing before the assembled audience. One loud burst of applause aroused him from his trance. When it had ceased, the divine voice of the prima donna exclaimed :

“Amadeus!” “Amadeus,” cried Moritz—the prince called for “Amadeus!”—The house echoed “Amadeus!!” But the vision had disappeared. Then all eyes were turned to where Moritz had sat, but he was no longer near the prince—to the box of Fräulein, but she too had mysteriously left the scene. .

FINIS.









Dw. 156.



